

NEW LARVAL FOOD PLANTS FOR TWO AUSTRALIAN FRUIT-FEEDING LYCAENID BUTTERFLIES

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Abstract

New larval food plants are recorded for *Bindahara phocides yurgama* Couchman (*Salacia disepala* (Hippocrateaceae) and *Celastris subspicata* (Celastraceae)) and *Deudorix epijarbas dido* Waterhouse (*Salacia disepala*).

Introduction

Larvae of three related genera of Australian lycaenids, *Virachola*, *Deudorix* and *Bindahara* feed on seeds inside the fruits of various woody trees and vines. This contribution records additional food plant records for two species. All fruits were collected from rainforest at Topaz (17°25'S 145°42'E) at an altitude of 680 m on the south-eastern edge of the Atherton Tableland, northern Queensland. Infested fruits were held in small glass aquaria with soil, a few dead leaves and twigs, until the adult butterflies emerged.

Bindahara phocides yurgama Couchman

Three observations were made. (1) A caterpillar was found in the seed of a fruit (2.5 cm dia.) of the vine, *Salacia disepala* (C.T. White) (Hippocrateaceae) on 28.i.1992. On 31 January it pupated under the edge of loose bark on a rotten branchlet. On 25 March an adult male emerged. (2) A caterpillar was found in a seed of *S. disepala* in early February 1992. It pupated inside a curled dead leaf on 9 February and an adult female emerged on 21 February. (3) A caterpillar was found on a fruit (1 cm dia.) of the vine, *Celastris subspicata* Hook. (Celastraceae) on 1.iii.1992. Pupation was not directly observed but an adult female emerged on 25 March.

The only previously recorded food plant for *B. p. yurgama* in Australia is the vine, *Salacia chinensis* L., which grows along beachfronts. Storey and Lambkin (1983), who described its life history on that vine, suggested that *S. disepala* may be a food plant in the higher elevated parts of the butterfly's range. This is confirmed. *Celastris* and *Salacia* are related because both genera are sometimes placed together in the Celastraceae e.g. Morley & Toelken, 1983.

Deudorix epijarbas dido Waterhouse

In January 1992 a fruit of *S. disepala* was found to contain a caterpillar, which pupated on 19 January on a curled dead leaf. An adult male emerged on February 1.

The taxonomic status of the two subspecies of *Deudorix epijarbas* as recognised by Common and Waterhouse (1981), viz. *D. e. diovis* Hewitson

and *D.e. dido*, is at present unclear. Both occur sympatrically in north Queensland. Dunn & Dunn (1991) have summarised the situation and have tentatively treated *Deudorix diovis* as a full species.

The specimen bred from *S. disepala* has veins on the upperside of hind wing contrastingly black for most of their length indicating that it belongs to the taxon *D.e.dido*.

Larval host records for *D. diovis* include *Harpullia pendula* Planchon (Common and Waterhouse 1981) and *Cupaniopsis anacardioides* (A. Rich.) Radlk. (De Baar 1983) [both Sapindaceae], *Macadamia* sp. and *Buckinghamia celsissima* F. Muell. (Common and Waterhouse 1981) [both Protaceae] Host records for *D. e. dido* include *Sarcopteryx martyana* (F. Muell.) Radlk. (Sankowsky 1991) and *Litchi chinensis* Sonner (Storey and Rogers 1980) [both Sapindaceae], *Connarus conchocarpus* F. Muell. (T.A. Lambkin, P.R. Samson pers. comm.) [Connaraceae] and *Caryota rumphiana* Mart. (Common and Waterhouse 1981) [Arecaceae].

The present record of *S. disepala* adds a new species and family of plants to the food plant list for these attractive butterflies.

References

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